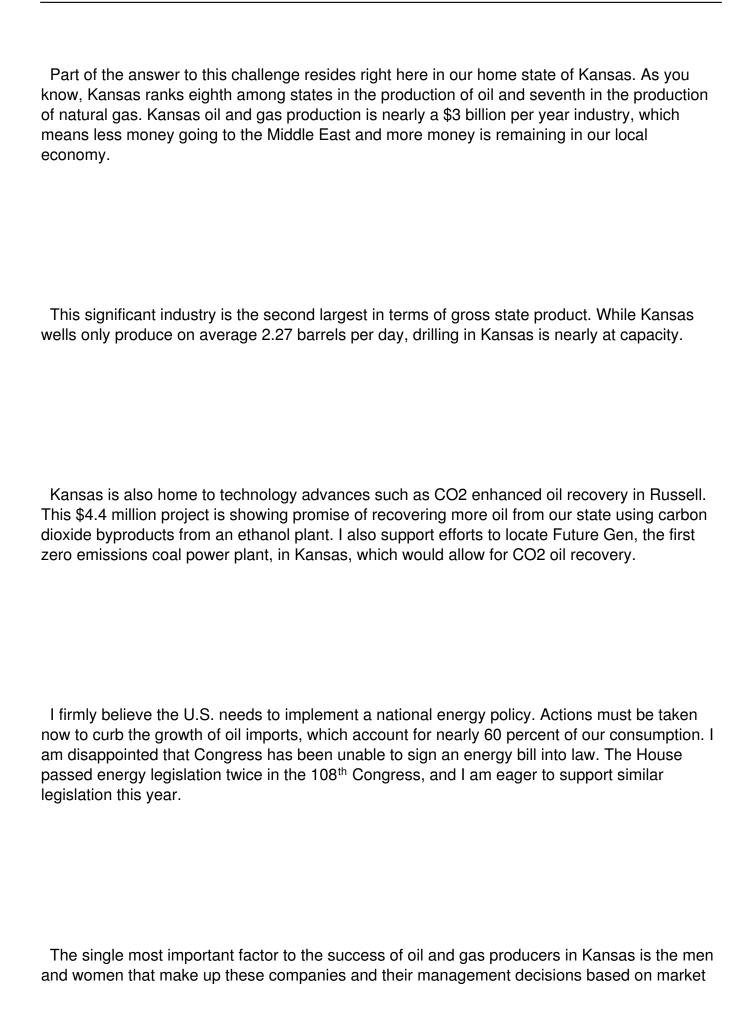
The history of oil and gas production in Kansas is a story of pioneers willing to take risks to bring economic prosperity to their communities. There have been times of good production and decent prices and other times of low prices and economic hardship. However, the resolve of oil

and gas producers remains strong and is a testament to the commitment and work ethic of those who work in this industry.
The inductees we honor tonight have at least one trait in common-leadership. They are leaders in their companies, their industry, and their communities. As I mentioned in my remarks in 2002, it is this very characteristic of leadership that makes the difference between success and failure, between innovation and status quo. The individual cannot be underestimated. The legacy that leaders leave by bettering the world around them endures and creates ripple effects in the lives of other potential leaders.
So to the inductees, I congratulate you. Thank you for your leadership and your contributions to the state of Kansas.
We live in exciting and challenging times. The war on terrorism, the ballooning federal deficit, the major reforms proposed for many government programs, the expanding trade deficit, and the continuing economic struggle are all topics we see on the nightly news. An addition to this list is the ever-increasing concern over the long-term energy needs of this country.
Americans consume 21 million barrels of oil a day, which is a full one-quarter of the total world consumption of 84 million barrels.

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forces. However, I feel it is vital that government actions work to promote and not inhibit their entrepreneurial efforts.
Throughout my time in Congress I have worked to improve the profitability of producers in Kansas by supporting legislation such as marginal well tax credits. Previous years of capping low production wells have taken their toll on the Kansas economy.
Despite the many challenges that we face today, I can't help but think that the spirit of the American people to make their lives better, the country stronger, and the world a safer place will prevail. Difficult times lead to innovations in both technology and business strategy, and I have little doubt that the scarcities of today will drive the progress of tomorrow.
Thank you again for allowing me to join you this evening in honoring the new inductees to the Kansas Oil and Gas Hall of Fame. I also thank you for the privilege of representing my fellow Kansans in Washington. I am honored to join the leaders in this room in their efforts to enhance the unique and valuable way of life we enjoy in Kansas.
Thank you again.